



U.S. Immigration
and Customs
Enforcement

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News Release

RWANDAN CHILD SMUGGLER SENTENCED

New Haven, Conn.—Kevin J. O'Connor, United States Attorney for the District of Connecticut, announced that Hussein Mutungirehe, age 40, a citizen of Rwanda residing at 8 Hobart Street, Meriden, Connecticut, was sentenced today on his convictions for illegally harboring an alien, and for illegally transporting alien children.

During proceedings this morning in New Haven federal court, Senior United States District Judge Peter C. Dorsey sentenced Mutungirehe to a six-month term of imprisonment. Mutungirehe has been in custody for approximately 13 months. As a result of his convictions, Mutungirehe is subject to deportation to Rwanda.

On January 13, 2004, Mutungirehe and Abiba Kanzayire were charged in a 13-count Superseding Indictment related to smuggling children into the United States. On September 9, 2004, Mutungirehe pleaded guilty to counts 9, 12 and 13 of the Indictment. Count 9 charged him with illegally harboring an alien, and Counts 12 and 13 charged him with illegally transporting alien children.

In pleading guilty, Mutungirehe admitted to harboring at his Meriden residence a female alien child who he knew to be illegally in the United States. He further admitted to transporting two male children that he knew were illegally smuggled into the United States to the U.S. and Canadian border, and facilitated their entry into Canada.

On September 9, 2004, Kanzayire pleaded guilty to Counts 2, 3, 4 and 8 of the Indictment. Counts 2, 3, and 4 charged her with illegally encouraging alien children to come to the United States. Count 8 charged her with illegally bringing an alien child into the United States. On December 15, 2004, Kanzayire was sentenced to time served, which was approximately 12 months of imprisonment. As a result of her convictions, Kanzayire agreed to be deported to Rwanda.

"The safety and welfare of children is of paramount importance to this Office," U.S. Attorney O'Connor stated. "Smuggling children is a dangerous endeavor where profit, rather than a child's well-being, is the common motive. We will diligently investigate and prosecute these crimes."

“Child smuggling is an absolutely reprehensible crime,” added Robin M. Avers, Special Agent-in-Charge of ICE in New England. “The importance of bringing individuals like this to justice cannot be overstated. The protection of children from smugglers and other predators remains a very high priority of ICE, and we will continue to aggressively pursue any person or organization that attempts to smuggle or exploit a child.”

This case was investigated by Special Agents of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) under the Department of Homeland Security, Special Agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Officers of United States Customs and Border Protection, and assisted by the Connecticut State Police.

The case was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Krishna R. Patel.

ICE

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement was established in March 2003 as the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security. ICE is comprised of five integrated divisions that form a 21st century law enforcement agency with broad responsibilities for a number of key homeland security priorities.